REDSKIN NATURE.

CHIPPEWA OUTBREAK SHOWS WHAT INDIAN FRIENDLINESS IS.

FACTS ABOUT THE FIGHTING TRIBE.

The Only One That Has Retained Its Original Territory Since the White Man Came to America--Superstitions of the Chippewas.

(For the Dispatch.)

The tendency of the Indian without a moment's warning to throw off the garments of civilization, after years of quiet, peaceful farmlife, and put on the war paint preliminary to a savage attack on his former white friends, is a psychological puzzle. It seems that with the Indian there is only a single step between friendship and murder. The transformation from lamb to lion takes places with such incomprehensible suddenness that the closest students of the North American Indian's character have been unable to explain this peculiarity. Why should the Chippewa Indians, who were a few days prior to the recent murderous outbreak as quiet and law-respecting as any white citizens, suddenly fling off their nineteenth-century clothing, and with brandished tomahawks and fiendish yells, dance the ghost dance that precedes an attack on the settlers and a slaughter of the innocents?

The answer to the question that has been given up by so many students of human nature is that the redman has an hereditary dislike to showing his feelings on the surface. He is stoic. To repress his real sentiments is a national instinct with the Indian. The whites, careless in their strength, go about their daily work and know nothing of the smouldering volcano around them. The Indians lock up their grievances in their own breasts, nursing them in secret, and brooding over their wrongs until, with a flash, the spark leaps into flame and the peaceful redman relapses in an instant to the fiendish barbarism of his forefathers. After that the nearest troops cannot be gotten to the Indian's territory too quickly if lives are to be saved.

The Chippewas had their grievances before the outbreak. It was no great matter from a white man's standpoint, but generally speaking, the redmen are children.

A United States Deputy Marshal had made an arrest on a warrant, something that stirs to the depth the resentment of the Indian, who regards the deprivation of liberty as the greatest infliction that can be placed upon him. An Indian confined for a very short term of imprisonment will pine and die. They cannot live shut up in a cell. The sunshine and the free air are absolutely necessary to their existence. When, therefore, the Marshal came and secured his prisoner his Indian relatives attacked the officer and forcibly obtained his release. This could not be allowed to pass unheeded, so United States soldiers were sent to teach the Indians that Federal laws must be respected. The Indians gathered to defend their principles, and the fatal fight followed.

The tribe is one of the noblest in the land. The Chippewas belong to the Algonquin family, whose territory extended from the Mississippi to east of the great lakes. On the east the Chippewas had for neighbors in the old days the Iroquois, while west and southwest the Sioux claimed the hunting grounds. They were both sworn foes to the Chippewas. The battles between the Chippewas on the one side and the Iroquois and Sioux on the other are uncountable. Fights were as common as buffalo hunts, and whenever two braves of the warring tribes met it was one man's scalp or the other's.

The Chippewas usually had the best of the fighting, for they were then, and are now, a brave and hardy race. One remarkable thing about the tribe is, that it still occupies the same territory as in the days before the white man overran the West. Other tribes have been driven from their original territory, but the Chippewas are on the old place still. The particular tribe with which the present outbreak originated numbered 1,153 when they were last counted, in 1897. The whole tribe numbered at that time 7,651. There were 1,123 of the Chippewas at Lake Leech in 1890, 569 of this number being males, and 324 above the age of 18. In addition to these the Cass Lake and the Winnebegoshist reservations had 289, and Otter Tail 682. The land owned by the band who have just been defying United States troops comprises 414,449 acres, and 350 of these acres are under cultivation by the Indians. The tribe raises annually 600 bushels of corn, 1,220 bushels of vegetables, and 250 tons of hay. The annual revenue of the Indians from the sale of this farm produce is $1,650.

According to the returns of the government agents, 6,400 Indians were living on the reservation in 1890, of which 4,600 wore American clothes, 1,000 could read, 1,200 were Church members. It will be seen, therefore, how highly civilized the tribe has become, and how impossible it is to rely upon these civilizing agencies to change the nature of the redman.

It was the Chippewa tribe with which the commission, appointed in 1889, negotiated regarding the acceptance of allotments in severalty. The Indians agreed to the terms of the commission, but nothing has been done about it since, a neglect that has had its share in souring the Chippewas' friendship for the white man.

There is a great fondness in the breast of the Chippewa for his native heath. A book published by one of the tribe thus describes the reservation and the tribesmen: "When I look upon the land of the Ojibways I cannot but be convinced of the fact that in no other portion of the world can there be a territory more favored by Heaven. The waters are abundant and good, the air bracing and healthy, and the soil admirably adapted for agricultural purposes. It is not much to be wondered at that in such a climate such a strong, athletic, and hardy race of men should exist as the Ojibways are generally acknowledged to be. In fact, they could scarcely be otherwise. There is as much difference between them and many tribes of the South as there is between the strong wind and the gentle zephyr."

There is to be seen at the Smithsonian Institute a birchbark chart, about 18 inches wide and about 8 feet in length, on which there is a series of pictures that are supposed to give the history of the tribe. According to this chart the Chippewas owe their being to the following series of circumstances: When Mina Bozno, the Great Rabbit, who was the servant of Dzhe Manido, the Good Spirit, looked down upon the castle he beheld human beings, the ancestors of the Indians. They occupied the four quarters of the earth—the northeast, the southeast, the northwest, and the southwest. He saw how helpless they were, and desired to give them the means of warding off the diseases with which they were constantly afflicted, and to provide them with animals and plants to serve as food and for other comforts.

Thus thinking, the Great Rabbit remained hovering over the centre of the earth endeavoring to devise some means of communication with the beings there, when he heard a laugh and perceived a dark object upon the surface of the water in the west. He failed to make out its form, and it slowly disappeared, but it came again in the north, then in the east, and finally in the south, whereupon the Great Rabbit asked it to come to the centre of the earth that he might behold it, but it disappeared again. At last it came up in the west and then slowly approached the centre of the earth, where the Great Rabbit saw it was the Otter. Then he instructed the Otter in the mysteries of the medicine order, and gave him the implements and the material necessary for the sacred dances, including tobacco. It was through the Otter that the miserable beings on the earth were elevated and became Indians.

The Chippewas have the most peculiar religious beliefs. The soul, according to the superstition of the tribe, crosses the gulf between this world and the next over the body of a huge snake. A drowned man never gets over, but slips off into the lake below. Their idea of Heaven is a place of complete idleness, with abundance of food ready at hand. A Chippewa widow carries around with her wherever she goes a bundle tied up to represent her husband. At the end of a year she is relieved of the bundle and may again become a wife. The dead are exposed on a raised platform until nothing but the bones remain, when these are buried.

The accompanying illustrations, drawn from photographs by the courtesy of the United States Bureau of Ethnology, are not from photographs taken at the Chippewa reservation, but they show accurately the appearance of the tribesmen in times when they revert to their aboriginal habits.

Death of Major Wilkinson and types of the redskin foe. The brave soldiers who faced death at Santiago fall 'neath the fire of treacherous Chippewas.

Squirrels Feeding Sheep.

(Lewiston (Me.) Journal.)

A Bar Harbor gentleman tells this story of how the squirrels on White Island often spend their time in feeding a flock of sheep from a certain orchard there. He says that he and his companion who were duck shooting there last fall had stopped to rest in an old field in which there was an orchard. A flock of sheep was feeding near by. It was not long before their attention was called to the chirruping of some squirrels in a thicket, and they were surprised to see the sheep suddenly stop feeding and manifest great excitement.

The squirrels went into the orchard, and climbing into one of the trees resumed their loud chatter, evidently calling the sheep, since the flock made at once for the appletree. Then the squirrels began to bite off the apples, which fell among the hungry sheep, who would struggle for the fruit like so many schoolboys. The squirrels seemed to enjoy the fun, and after they had dropped a few apples from the first tree they skipped to a distant tree, for which the sheep would make in great confusion.

After the squirrels had thus enjoyed an hour's fun with their fleecy neighbors, and supplied them with a sufficient quantity of the fruit, they scampered back to their haunts in the thicket, leaving the sheep to resume their grazing.

NATURAL WATER SLIDE.

Whirls One Down a Mountain Side At a Great Pace.

There are only two places on earth where it is possible to enjoy the natural water slide—Perak, in the Malay Peninsula, and Papase'ea, in the Samoan jungle, just a few miles outside of Apia, says the New York Sun. At both these places it is possible to sit down in a shallow stream on the top of a long rock and slide on the water to the bottom of the rock, ending with a gasping dive into a deep pool. The thing has every appearance of being impossible, rasping; the first native who goes over shows it practicable.

It is one of the most exhilarating experiences that it is possible to imagine; in fact, it is impossible to imagine it, despite the utmost familiarity with water toboggans. To feel the chill of mountain water in the heart of the blazing tropics, to slide breathless on a long face of rock, to catch in the sudden flight, when the body feels as light as thistledown, flashes of rock and stream and waste of jungle vegetation, to fill the nostils with a blending of balms and odors, to float at last out from the rock and through the rushing air, and then, after the cold embrace of dark water, to drift idly, leisurely upward to a green dome, which grows brighter, and to rest the eyes again on chinks of blue sky in waving boughs above. All this goes to make up an experience not easily paralleled.

On the beach road through the one-sided town of Apia the cavalcade must make its way with measured steps. At last, when Lotopa is reached, the road, which has been broad enough for carriages to pass abreast, runs up against a wall of timber and stops short off.

Not exactly so. Close search shows off at one side a path worn by the hoofs of horses. Here the riding party must go in single file. People call that Indian file, but it is common to all savage people. They never walk side by side, no matter how wide the road; their paths are never more than wide enough to put one foot ahead of the other. Now the gorge of some brawling stream, which a sudden shower will make an impassable torrent; now gingerly picking the way on the very ridge of a height between streams, the road or trail rises steadily upward through the forest for two or three miles. At last it passes through a tangled wall of trees, whose low branches seem rightly placed, to sweep every rider from the saddle; it opens in a bare spot of about an acre, where the grasses grow high enough to hide a horse. The air is filled with a babbling and a brawling, but no stream is in sight.

The stream may be a rill or it may be a river; that depends on the recent rainfall on the mountain peaks in the centre of the island. It lies at the bottom of a gorge, which drops out of the green grass without warning. Just at this point a series of rocky ledges force the tiny stream to jump in cataracts, which in time of flood unite to form a single waterfall of great force and volume. There are three of these cataracts, each with its slide of rock and its deep pool, into which the water falls. The Samoans class them as the slides for children, for women, and for men. Of these, the highest one, the men's slide of the Samoans, gives the longest slide and the most thrill, and is accordingly the most in use.

The peculiar feature of this swimming place which distinguishes it from other mountain brooks is that you slide over the sloping rock in as dignified a posture as you can preserve under the circumstances, and plunge; or, rather, are violently plunged, in the pool at the foot. Having done this once, you clamber up the rock and do it all over again. It has that peculiarity in the most marked degree; once is never enough. The first time you go over your attention is fixed upon the importance of sitting mighty light on that whirling stream which, when it is too late to catch hold of anything to stop your flight, you realize is entirely too shallow for such transport. But the next time you want to see just where you left the water and began to sail through the air. You remember doing so most distinctly; somewhere in the operation you are sure that you beat any bird that ever flapped wings.

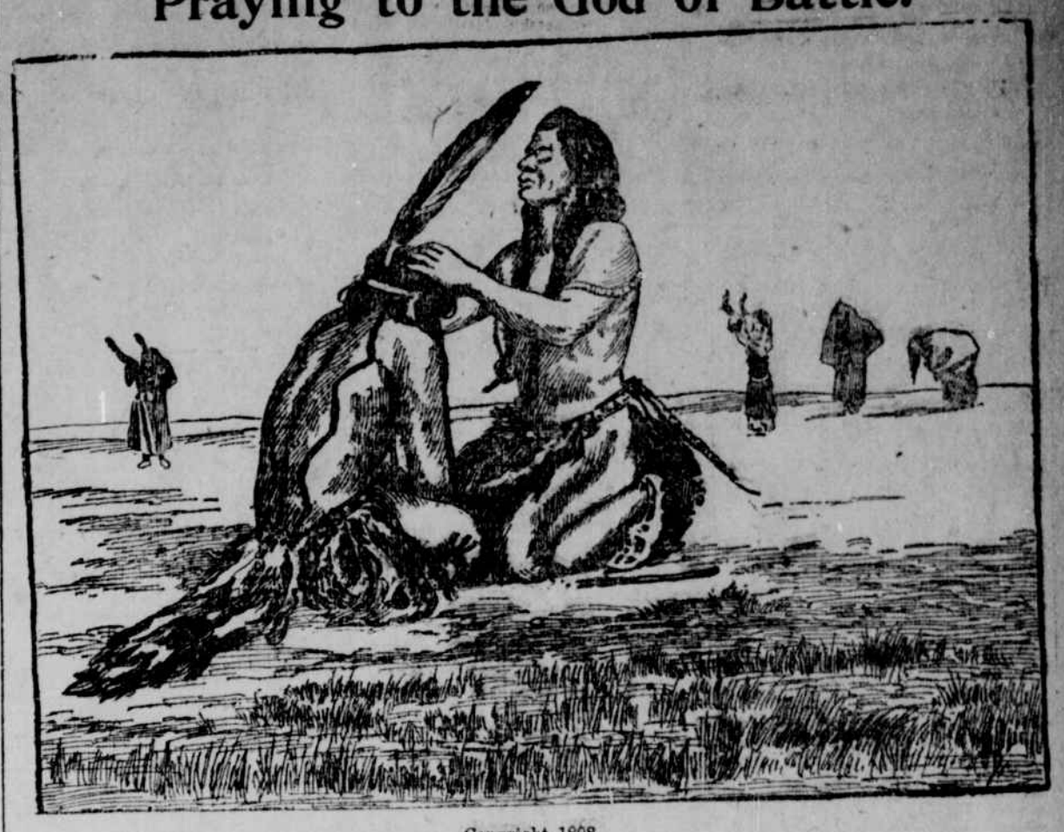
Just at the foot of the breakneck path down the wall of the gorge there are two little bays which serve as retiring rooms, where the visitors exchange such clothes as may fitly be worn in Apia for raiment better suited to water sport. The women bring old "falokas," which are the same thing as the Hawaiian "holoku," or Mother Hubbard. The Samoans of the party have brought each an old lavalava, or waistcloth. In a trice these have made the exchange, and with a deft twist of the cloth have fastened it about the waist so firmly that even the rough swirl of the waters will not loosen it one particle. But the tourist who has removed his normal clothing, and is struggling for the first time with a breechclout is in the throes of a tragedy, if one may judge from the loud and wrathful remarks which float out from the seclusion of his dressing-room. He does not know how to put the old thing on, and he knows that if he does succeed in getting it on it will never stay on. Wild calls for help bring some one who can instruct him in the mysteries of clothing himself in a gaudy square of calico two yards each way, but no amount of assurance will really convince him that it will stay in place with no better fastening than a mere twist. Miles from the nearest pin, he is in a fair way of relapsing into despair and his own clothing until a Samoan strips the bark from some sapling and makes him a belt.

No matter how often one takes the slide it never becomes an old story. Repetition of its changeless details never makes a single one of them tiresome. The experience is as exhilarating at the last as when first essayed. It is very hard to fix the thoughts on the details of this aerial yet aquatic voyage. One always remembers the sitting down in the thin trickle over the rock, the hitching forward inch by inch is also perfectly clear, but then comes a kaleidoscope. The water siezes on you; all sense of weight vanishes immediately; you are not conscious that you are in the stream, for the undoubted reason that the velocity is so great that you have no time to sink in the water, which flows along in the same headlong slide.

You are not conscious of the water which bears you nor of the rock from whose hard surface you are lifted up. There is the sensation of feathery lightness coupled with marvellous rapidity, and then there is a sudden swallowing up in a mass of water, and you become lighter even than in the air. At the end of the slide where the rock breaks away you fall with a mighty splash into the pool. Of this you are not conscious; you appreciate a welcome change of temperature. The next sensation is to feel that you are lying at ease far below somewhere, that without an exertion the body is floating slowly and restfully upward. The eyes are opened to a green glimmer above which becomes lighter, until all of a sudden the head is out of the water.

While swimming to the shelf of rock the next slider slides and scatters you with spray. You look up at his whizzing speed as in the twinkling of an eye he is hurled along the face of the rock; you see how helpless he is and how close the rock, and you wonder how you could ever dare such a foolhardy thing. Then you clamber up the rock and rush to do it all over again. You keep on sliding over this sliding rock of Papase'ea until there is barely time to escape being caught by nightfall in the jungle.

Praying to the God of Battle.



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